

FEBRUARY 2026

# First Things

First Lutheran Church (ELCA)

Chosen by Christ. Empowered to Serve.

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

### ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

First Lutheran has rescheduled its ANNUAL MEETING for Sunday, FEBRUARY 8 following the 9:30am worship service

A quorum was not met on January 25th so the Annual Meeting has been rescheduled for Sunday, February 8. We need 42 confirmed members to attend this meeting to approve the budget for 2026, and elect new council members, delegates and various board members. Please make plans to attend! Bishop Dee Pederson will be leading the worship service on February 8, and you are invited to stay after the meeting to meet and visit with her.

GUEST SPEAKER  
Pastor Matt  
"getting to know me"

Seniors on the Move  
invite all to a

### Valentine's Party!

Thursday, February 12  
2:00 - 4:00 pm

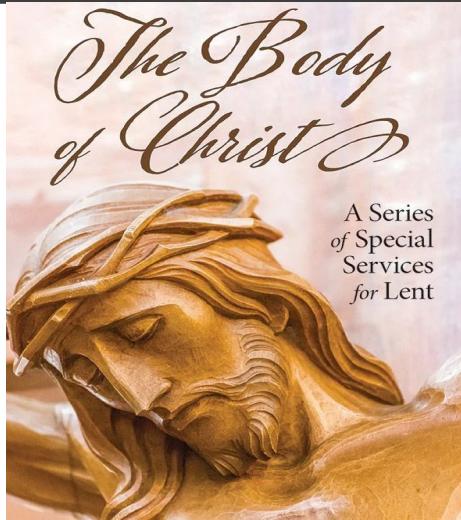
First Lutheran Church  
Fellowship Hall  
*handicap accessible*

GUEST SPEAKERS  
Emilie & Sharon  
"expanding our walls"

All are welcome to join in the fellowship as we celebrate Valentine's Day...a couple days early! Coffee and treats will be served. Don't forget to invite neighbors and friends! FREE rides to and from church are available by calling the Morris Transit at 320-589-1000

# ASH WEDNESDAY

February 18  
Worship at 6:30pm  
at FEDERATED  
(no meal served)



## MIDWEEK LENTEN SERVICES

Wednesdays at 6:30pm

February 25, March 11 & 25 at FIRST  
March 4 & 18 at FEDERATED

*Our Lenten Midweek services will alternate between First and Federated.*

*A light supper will be served at 5:30pm at FEDERATED on the Wednesdays they host the service. No supper will be served at First.*

Hello, First Family

The season of Lent is almost here. It begins on Ash Wednesday, which is February 18. Have you ever wondered what this special season leading up to Easter is all about? Maybe the following will answer some of your questions.

**WHAT IS LENT?** Lent is a season of the Christian Year where Christians focus on simple living, prayer and fasting in order to grow closer to God.

**WHEN IS LENT?** It's the forty days before Easter. Lent excludes Sundays because every Sunday is like a mini-Easter. This year Lent is from February 18–April 4.

**SO, THE REAL BEGINNING OF LENT IS ASH WEDNESDAY?** Yes. Ash Wednesday usually begins with a service where we recognize our mortality, repent of our sins and return to our loving God. We recognize life as a precious gift from God, and re-turn our lives toward Jesus. We may make resolutions and commit to change our lives over the next forty days so that we might be more like Christ. In an Ash Wednesday service, usually a pastor or priest marks the sign of the cross on a person's forehead with ashes.

**WHY ASHES?** In Jewish and Christian history, ashes are a sign of mortality and repentance. Mortality, because when we die, our bodies eventually decompose and we become dust/dirt/ash. Repentance, because long ago, when people felt remorse for something they did, they would put ashes on their head and wear sackcloth to remind them that sin is uncomfortable and leads to a sort of death of the spirit. This was their way of confessing their sins and asking for forgiveness.

**WHAT DO CHRISTIANS DO WITH ASHES?** At an Ash Wednesday service, people are invited to come forward to receive the ashes. The pastor will make a small cross on your forehead by smudging the ashes. While the ashes remind us of our mortality and sin, the cross reminds us of Jesus' resurrection and forgiveness. It's a powerful, non-verbal way that we can experience God's forgiveness and renewal as we return to Jesus.

**SO, WHAT IS LENT?** After Jesus' baptism, he was sent into the wilderness by the Spirit, where he fasted and prayed for 40 days. During his time there, he was tempted by Satan and found clarity and strength to resist temptation; afterward, he was ready to begin his ministry. During Lent, we are in our own wilderness, preparing our whole selves for a closer relationship with Jesus. Lent is a time to repent—to return to God and re-focus our lives to be more in line with Jesus.

God's blessings,  
Pastor Matt

**COFFEE HOUR** is served in the fellowship hall following the worship service on Sunday mornings. The **CHARITY Service Group** is on the schedule to serve coffee hour during the month of February. Those in the Charity Service Group are: Jone & Doyle Anderson, Lauren Carlson, Bob & Vicki Dalager, Barry & Nancy Erdahl, Cheryl Higgins, Brent & Jackie Huebner, Steve & Michelle Just, Dick & Suzanne Smith, Kevin & Jeanne Williamson. Please sign up on the bulletin board across from the church office.

**LUNCH BUNCH** meets on Wednesday, February 4 at 11:30am at Common Cup. Order off the menu; pay your own way. All are welcome to join us for food and fellowship!

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE** for the March newsletter is noon on Thursday, February 19.

**ZIPPORAH BIBLE STUDY** meets on Thursday, February 19th at 2:00pm in the church fellowship hall.

## SUPPORT MISSIONARY for the DAY

Jan 11 In memory of Judy Buro's mother from Doug & Sharon Ehlers

Jan 17 In loving memory of Lenore Anderson on her birthday from Pat & Gary Smith and family

You can sponsor the missionaries of the ELCA for \$15 per day. You may give this in memory, or in honor of someone. Contact the church office for more information, or to sponsor at date.

Jan 11 ELCA Lutheran Worship radio broadcast given in memory of Lenore Anderson from Pat, Gary, Chad, Ryan, Shannon, Hunter, Angie & Alexis Smith

## CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS: JAN 6, 2026

### Committee Reports:

- printed minutes were given to the council from Worship & Music and Fusion Youth.
- a list of the Endowment donations given in December were given to each council member

### Visitor:

- Bishop Dee Pederson was in attendance to offer encouragement and get feedback on how things were going with the collaboration between Federated and First. She will also be here on February 8<sup>th</sup> to lead the combined service with Federated and First.

### Old Business:

- 2026 salary for Pastor Matt has not yet been finalized
- congregational survey for both First and Federated will be sent out
- Annual Meeting is set for January 26, 2026 with a back up date of February 8
- discussed candidates for open council seats

### New Business:

- approved salary increases to be retroactive to January 1 rather than when contracts are finalized or after annual meeting
- discussed the 2026 ballot and open delegates/board member positions
- Common Cup financial struggles were discussed

### Treasurer's Report:

- Printed financial reports were given to all council members.

Next month's council meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 10, at 7:00pm. Devotions by Liz.

## DECEMBER'S GIVING and EXPENSE

\$26,213.07 December giving

\$27,282.18 December Expenses

\$212,896.38 Year-to-Date Giving

\$222,197.74 Year-to-Date Expenses

## MISSION & EVANGELISM

### STEVENS COUNTY FOOD SHELF DRIVE

**Now through Palm Sunday, March 29, 2026.** First Lutheran Endowment Fund will match any money donated during this time! Goods and monetary donations will be accepted for MN March Food Share Month. Make checks to FLC and in the memo line please note Stevens County Food Shelf. Monetary donations put in the offering plate at worship must be in a separate envelope marked "food shelf" or they can be mailed to or dropped off at the church office. In-Kind items will be accepted in the Narthex. Remember, needs fall into categories besides food, such as household and self-care items.

### ELCA WORLD HUNGER and GLOBAL BARNYARD NOISY OFFERING

Together with the Sunday School plans are being made to soon repeat the ELCA World Hunger/Global Barnyard Noisy Offering Challenge. Stay tuned!

### LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response offering envelopes are available. Please write checks to First Lutheran Church and in the memo state Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR) along with your designated preference. For example, "Hurricane" or "Fire;" "Where Needed Most" with either 'Response U.S.' or 'Response International'

### THANK YOU

to the volunteers who have joined the Storehouse Ministry in the past months. Remember, this is an ongoing opportunity to make a difference for hunger regionally and internationally. Located at 25 Atlantic Avenue in Hancock, at **6:30pm, weekly on Tuesdays**, edible bean two pound bags are made for shipping. Afternoon sessions have been added. Future sign-ups are done on a weekly basis through an email. To receive the email, you may call 320-491-6765, or contact a committee member. You can make it as often or as little as your schedule permits, as a family event or as a group of friends together. Please keep this and other opportunities presented in future newsletters in mind, as First Lutheran seeks to act as Church Without Walls all throughout the year.

### ELDER VISITS

Do you think it's important to visit the elderly and others who live in care centers? You will have just that opportunity to do so during the month of February! In collaboration with the UMM student volunteers who have scheduled visits with three Morris locations this semester, we are invited to join their dates, designed especially for interactive visits, one on each date: **Saturdays, February 7th, 14th and 28th from 1:00-3:45pm.** (Similarly, next fall there will be three more Saturday afternoon dates selected.) Please call or text Emilie soon at 719-440-8575 to coordinate your visit to any or all locations (West Wind Village, Legacy, SkyView.)

### RESCHEDULED EVENTS - Water Filter Build and LWR Baby Kits

Older Sunday School students will pack Lutheran World Relief Baby Kits on Sunday, February 8th, 8:30am. **Sunday School students will assist families and individuals to build water filters from a kit at Coffee Hour on Sunday, February 22, 10:30am.** The kits are made available by Thrivent and support Wine to Water, <https://www.wtw.org>. Each filter that is built provides clean water to 12 people for 10 years. Enjoy working with these young people at Coffee Hour!



Mark your calendars for the Glacial Ridge Spring Gathering to be held at First Lutheran on Saturday, April 18 with registration starting at 9:00am. The theme will be "This is My Father's World" with a musical program with Ken & Linda Hodgson. More details to follow.



# FEBRUARY 2026



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30am Worship at <b>FEDERATED</b> with Fellowship following Sunday school held after Children's Message during service	2	3 11am Pastors' Text Study 12pm Gatherings for at Old #1	4 11:30am Lunch Bunch 6:30-8:00pm *No Element *Fusion at FAITH 7pm Joint Choir at Federated	5	6 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris & Hancock)	7 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
8 8:30am Sunday school 9:30am Worship at <b>FIRST</b> with <b>ANNUAL MEETING</b> following. <i>Bishop Dee Pederson leading worship</i>	9	10 11am Pastors' Text Study 7pm Council Meeting	11 5:30pm Fusion Summer Trip Info Mtg at FAITH 6:30-8:00pm *Element at FIRST *Fusion at FAITH 7pm Joint Choir at Federated	12 9am-12pm Share & Care (quilting) 2-4pm Valentine's Party	13 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris & Hancock)	14 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran  <b>Happy Valentine's DAY</b>
15 9:30am Worship at <b>FEDERATED</b> with Fellowship following Sunday school held after Children's Message during service	16	17 11am Pastors' Text Study	18 ASH WEDNESDAY 6:30pm Worship at <b>FEDERATED</b> 6:30-8:00pm *No Element *Fusion at Lonnie Patty Anderson's	19 2pm Zipporah Bible Study in fellowship hall 12pm Newsletter Articles Due	20 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris & Hancock)	21 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran
22 8:30am Sunday school 9:30am Worship at <b>FIRST</b> with Fellowship following 10:30am Water Filter Build (fellowship hall)	23	24 11am Pastors' Text Study	25 5:15-6:15pm Lent Supper fundraiser served by Fusion at FAITH 6:30pm Midweek Lenten Worship at FIRST 6:30-8:00pm *Fusion at FAITH No Element classes	26 9am-12pm Share & Care (quilting)	27 7:15-8:00am Fusion Breakfast (Morris only)	28 8am Men's Bible Study at Faith Lutheran

Services are streamed live on YouTube at both **FIRST** or **FEDERATED** depending on where the service is held.

(First Lutheran Church - Morris MN) and (Federated Church of Morris)

Recorded services available on **FIRST'S** website at [www.flcmorris.org](http://www.flcmorris.org) and on **FEDERATED'S** website at [morrisfederated.org](http://morrisfederated.org)

Rita is available Monday through Thursday from 8am to 4pm and is in church office on Tuesday and Wednesday mornings.

## In case of Inclement Weather

When necessary, weather cancellations will be communicated primarily through the local radio station, on KKOK (FM95.7) and KMRS (AM1230).

We will also strive to have this information available on the church's Facebook page and website. If time allows, emails and text messages will be sent out to those with current email/cell phone information on file with the church office.

# HAPPY Birthday

- Feb 1: Michael Bjorklund  
Justin Hanson, Sawyer Fynboh
- Feb 2: Cathy Solvie
- Feb 4: Sheila Fahje
- Feb 5: Dean Danter, Caleb Schultz
- Feb 6: Holli Christians
- Feb 8: Bruce McCormack  
Herb Nelson
- Feb 10: Eleanor Plattner
- Feb 12: Deb Mattheis
- Feb 13: Lilly Nesvig
- Feb 16: Joanne Thompson, Neil Weise
- Feb 17: Zach Lies
- Feb 18: Erica Swenson  
Rochelle VanKempen
- Feb 20: Nancy Erdahl, Wayde Peterson
- Feb 21: Matt Hilbrands, Sam Just
- Feb 22: Angie Buchanan
- Feb 23: Matthew Carlson
- Feb 25: Garner Swenson, Gage Wevley  
Jeanne Williamson
- Feb 26: Matthew Burnett
- Feb 27: Kris Hutchings
- Feb 28: Allen Monroe

# HAPPY Anniversary!

- Feb 13: Jay & Joleen Hanson

## FEBRUARY WORSHIP SERVANTS

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 8	SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22	WED., FEBRUARY 25
8:30am Sunday school 9:30am Worship HC	8:30am Sunday school 9:30am Worship HC	Midweek Lenten 6:30pm
<b>Ushers:</b> Dick Smith Burnett Family	<b>Ushers:</b> Steve Just Fynboh Family	<b>Ushers:</b> Bob Heck Nesvig Family
<b>Lector:</b> Shana Ulrich	<b>Lector:</b> LeAnn Dean	
<b>Acolytes:</b> Gage Schultz Wyatt Schultz	<b>Acolytes:</b> Zoe Krosch Lilly Nesvig	<b>Acolytes:</b> Jamis Burnett Jacoby Burnett
<b>Communion Prep:</b> (silver tray/wafers) Laurie Feuchtenberger	<b>Communion Prep:</b> (silver tray/wafers) Judy Buro	
<b>Communion Server:</b> Vicki Dalager	<b>Communion Server:</b> Millie Tschetter	
<b>Video:</b> Dave Jungst	<b>Video:</b> Mike Odello	<b>Video:</b> Tony Feuchtenberger
<b>TV slides:</b> Brayden Carlson	<b>TV slides:</b> Owen Nesvig	<b>TV slides:</b> Lucy Feuchtenberger
<b>Nursery:</b> Pam Wiese	<b>Nursery:</b> Michelle Just	<b>Nursery:</b> Vicki Dalager
<b>Accompanist:</b> Deb Mahoney	<b>Accompanist:</b>	<b>Accompanist:</b> Deb Mahoney



Sunday, FEBRUARY 1  
FEDERATED CHURCH

9:30am Worship with Holy Communion  
Sunday school held after Children's Message

Sunday, FEBRUARY 8  
FIRST LUTHERAN

8:30am Sunday school  
9:30am Worship with Holy Communion  
ANNUAL MEETING following worship

Sunday, FEBRUARY 15  
FEDERATED CHURCH

9:30am Worship with Holy Communion  
Sunday school held after Children's Message

Ash Wednesday, FEB 18  
FEDERATED CHURCH

6:30pm Worship  
(no supper served)

Sunday, FEBRUARY 22  
FIRST LUTHERAN

8:30am Sunday school  
9:30am Worship with Holy Communion

Midweek Lenten, FEB 25  
FIRST LUTHERAN

6:30pm Worship  
(no supper served)

Sunday, MARCH 1  
FEDERATED CHURCH

9:30am Worship with Holy Communion  
Sunday school after Children's Message

## SR. HIGH FUSION SCHEDULE (Grades 9 - 12)

- Wed., February 4: 6:30-8:00pm "Don't Chicken Out" at FAITH Lutheran
- Wed., February 11: 5:30pm Summer Trip Interest and Info Meeting at Faith Lutheran; hosted by Katie & Pastor Chris
- Wed., February 11: 6:30-8:00pm Worship Night: Self-Reflection at FAITH Lutheran
- Wed., February 18: 6:30-8:00pm: Faith Statements and Fellowship; hosted at Lonnie & Patty Anderson's home
- Wed., February 25: 6:30-8:00pm "Cozy with a Cause" Service Project at FAITH Lutheran

## Fusion BIBLE and BREAKFAST: 7:15-8:00am | Morris at Faith Lutheran and Hancock at Alberts

- Fridays, February 6, 13, 20 & 27: Morris Group at FAITH Lutheran
- Fridays, February 6, 13 & 20: Hancock Group at ALBERTS

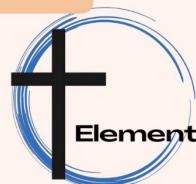
## What is Fusion? (grades 9-12)

Fusion is a youth group for students in grade 9th-12th and is also part of the collaboration between the five area churches. Fusion is a place where youth are welcomed and known. A place where they can learn and grow in faith, connect with leaders and other youth, and participate in adventure and service all in the name of Jesus Christ.



## Element Schedule

### FEBRUARY 2026



4TH

ELEMENT 6:30-8:00PM

Lutheran Life

#1 Baptism: One Lord, Faith, Baptism

11TH

ELEMENT 6:30-8:00PM

Luther and the Catechism  
#6 The Ten Commandments Overview

18TH

NO ELEMENT

Ash Wednesday

Please attend your church's Lenten Service

25TH

NO ELEMENT

Lent Season

Please attend your church's Lenten Service

- ELEMENT RETREAT POSTPONED FOR SPRING
- FUSION IS PROVIDING LENTEN SUPPER AT FAITH LUTHERAN ON THE 25TH

serving from 5:15-6:15pm

## BRAIN TEASER RIDDLES

1. Where do fish keep their money?
2. What has a face and two hands but no arms or legs?
3. What gets wetter as it dries?
4. What belongs to you but is used by others?
5. What has a thumb and four fingers but is not alive?
6. What has to be broken before it can be used?
7. What grows when you feed it but dies when you water it?
8. What can you catch, but cannot throw.
9. What has many keys but cannot open doors?
10. What can run, but cannot walk?

1) in a river bank 2) a clock 3) a towel  
4) your name 5) a glove 6) an egg  
7) a fire 8) a cold 9) a piano 10) water

First Lutheran Church  
200 East 5th St  
Morris, MN 56267

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Morris, MN

### First Lutheran Church, ELCA

200 East 5th Street

Morris, MN 56267

Phone: 320-589-3242

website: [www.flcmorris.org](http://www.flcmorris.org)

email: [office@flcmorris.org](mailto:office@flcmorris.org)

Facebook: Morris-First Lutheran Church

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### Worship Schedule

SEE SCHEDULE ON CALENDAR

Broadcasted live via Facebook and  
YouTube; recorded services  
available on our website.

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### Televised Services:

Tuesdays at 1:30pm

MediaCom: Channel 8 or 117-2 (digital)

### STAFF

Matt Orendorff, Pastor  
Rita Bye, Office Manager  
Wyatt Vavra, Custodian

### EMAIL

[morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com](mailto:morrisfederatedpastor@gmail.com)  
[office@flcmorris.org](mailto:office@flcmorris.org)

### CHURCH COUNCIL

Allen Monroe, President  
J. Mark Nesvig, Vice President  
Naomi Fynboh, Treasurer  
Matt Hilbrands, Secretary  
Elizabeth Harris  
Bob Heck

